



**U.S. AGENCY FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT  
BUREAU FOR DEMOCRACY, CONFLICT, AND HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE (DCHA)  
OFFICE OF U.S. FOREIGN DISASTER ASSISTANCE (OFDA)**

***LIBERIA – Complex Emergency (Revised)***

Situation Report #1, Fiscal Year (FY) 2003

June 30, 2003

**BACKGROUND**

Liberia has been marked by intermittent civil war since Charles Taylor launched a rebellion against the military regime of Samuel Doe in 1989. More than 200,000 people were killed during the ongoing conflict in Liberia in the 1990s. In 1997, Taylor emerged the dominant power, winning the 1997 presidential election. Two opposition groups, controlling between 60 and 80 percent of the country, are currently attempting to oust Taylor from power. The main opposition group, Liberians United for Reconciliation and Democracy (LURD), has been fighting President Taylor since 1999 and has grown from a northern-based insurgent movement to a force that now controls the majority of the country. The second opposition group, the Movement for Democracy in Liberia (MODEL), based in southern Liberia, began incursions into Liberia from Côte d'Ivoire in April 2003 resulting in large-scale population displacement. Years of conflict have had devastating consequences for the humanitarian situation in Liberia, which is currently ranked 174 out of 175 countries by the UN World Human Development Index, which measures health and living conditions.

<b>NUMBERS AT A GLANCE</b>		<b>SOURCE</b>
Internally Displaced	220,000	UN OCHA, June 2003
Refugees	116,000 Liberians in Guinea 52,000 Liberians in Sierra Leone 45,000 Liberians in Côte d'Ivoire 17,000 Sierra Leoneans in Liberia	UNHCR, June 2003

**Total FY 2003 USAID/OFDA Assistance to Liberia ..... \$1,268,784**  
**Total FY 2003 USG Humanitarian Assistance to Liberia..... \$8,268,784**

**CURRENT SITUATION**

*Political.*

In June, President Taylor agreed to participate in peace talks in Ghana in an effort to end the ongoing conflict as opposition forces moved closer to the capital, Monrovia. The most recent battle between LURD and government forces for control of the capital began on June 5. Peace talks in Accra culminated in June 17 with the signing of a ceasefire, and under the terms of the peace agreement Taylor was to step down within 30 days to make way for a transitional government. However, within hours of the signing, the ceasefire had collapsed with both sides accusing the other of the first violation.

LURD forces reached the western edge of Monrovia on June 23 and advanced into the city's western outskirts the following day, displacing thousands of people into the city centre. Many of the displaced were forced to abandon their homes for the second time in one month, after fleeing the first opposition incursion into western Monrovia at the beginning of June. These residents had returned to their homes following the ceasefire agreement.

With the collapse of the ceasefire on June 24, violent clashes between government and opposition forces have engulfed Monrovia. Large numbers of chronically displaced persons moved into the city to escape the fighting. Adding to the numbers of internally displaced persons (IDPs) are residents of northern Monrovia who moved into the city center. According to the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), sanitation conditions and access to safe drinking water are of growing concern in Monrovia, and the city is running short of supplies to accommodate the large population influx. Shelter, food, water, and medical care are currently unavailable, and many stores have closed due to fears of looting.

On June 26, government troops pushed LURD forces out of Bushrod Island, Monrovia's deep water port, which was occupied by the opposition for one day. According to GOL military officials, opposition forces retreated to an area around St. Paul's River Bridge, six miles from the center of the capital. Humanitarian workers report that approximately 300 people have been injured by bullets and shrapnel during the recent clashes. During the past week, residents of Duala and New Kru town suburbs of Monrovia and in IDP camps in Seighbeh, VOA, and

Plumkor have reported armed robberies and incidents of rape committed at night by armed men. These residents are now part of the mass movement into central Monrovia.

Despite the current violence, President Taylor has said that peace talks in Accra will continue. However, according to the executive secretary of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), which helped broker the peace talks, the renewed fighting has served to undo all efforts to bring an end to the conflict. West African mediators threatened to formally end the peace talks in Ghana if both sides did not observe the ceasefire by the morning of June 27. On June 27, LURD claimed to have called a new ceasefire, but fighting continued in Monrovia.

#### *Humanitarian Access.*

During the past two years, access by the United Nations (U.N.) and other humanitarian organizations to vulnerable populations, including IDPs and Sierra Leonean refugees, has decreased throughout Liberia. Hundreds of humanitarian workers have been directly affected by the violence; several have been killed and many others remain unaccounted for.

As of early April, humanitarian access had been reduced to 30 percent of the country. Recent attacks on IDP and refugee camps near Monrovia have forced camp residents and humanitarian workers to flee into the capital. According to ICRC, access to the more than 60,000 IDPs who were living at the Montserrado camps has become critical as the camps are either inside areas under LURD control or scattered throughout Monrovia.

International staff of the U.N. and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) were forced to evacuate from Monrovia on June 11, when intense fighting in the western suburbs threatened to spread into the city. However, some international staff of ICRC and Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF) remained, as well as significant number of local staff of the U.N. and NGOs. There are approximately 30 U.N. international staff in Monrovia, some of whom returned to the capital after being evacuated in early June, but most are confined to the U.N. compound.

#### *Displaced Populations.*

UN OCHA estimates that more than 220,000 people are currently displaced in Liberia as a result of the conflict. As a result of the recent increase in hostilities, the U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) has lost contact with 40,000 Ivorian refugees, 43,000 Liberian returnees, and 50,000 third country nationals in Liberia. The number of refugees occupying the UNHCR building has risen from 350 to approximately 5,000. Repatriation operations for Sierra Leonean refugees have stopped.

On June 24, World Vision International (WVI) reported that the majority of displaced Monrovia residents at the

SKD Stadium had returned to their homes, and, according to the Liberia Refugee Repatriation and Resettlement Commission, the original population of more than 60,000 at the stadium was reduced to 17,402. However, on June 25, WVI reported that the few IDPs who had returned to their former camps were moving back to central Monrovia, increasing the population at the Samuel K. Doe Sports (SKD) Stadium and schools in the capital. According to the U.N. Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UN OCHA), there are now 58,000 IDPs living at the stadium. The current population of Monrovia is approximately one million.

The situation outside of Monrovia, where an even larger number of IDPs and refugees are without emergency aid, is equally despairing. According to UN OCHA, there are approximately 150,000 IDPs in seven camps near Monrovia. In addition, an estimated 70,000 IDPs in Bong, Margibi, and Grand Bassa counties are receiving humanitarian assistance. Approximately 17,000 Sierra Leone refugees were also being assisted in camps around Monrovia.

UNHCR reported that a total of 1,164 Liberian refugees have been received in Kailahun, Sierra Leone since June 11. Earlier reports of between 1,000 and 2,000 refugees and returnees heading towards the border in Pujehun could not be confirmed, according to UN OCHA.

According to Amnesty International, in early April, thousands of people crossed back into Côte d'Ivoire to escape escalating fighting in Liberia. These same refugees, comprised of nationals from Liberia, Côte d'Ivoire, and other neighboring countries, had only recently entered Liberia to escape fighting in Côte d'Ivoire.

#### *Health.*

Oxfam staff in Monrovia are working to supply clean water, soap, and water containers and to construct emergency sanitation facilities for the capital. Merlin has reported confirmed cases of cholera and measles in Monrovia. According to UN OCHA, of the number of cases of diarrhea among the population residing at the SKD Stadium has risen from 50 to 400 in the past week.

On June 25, MSF reported that for the second time in two weeks, staff and patients were forced to leave Redemption Hospital, one of only two public hospital serving civilians in Monrovia. On June 24, MSF evacuated all the patients as fighting approached the northern area of the city. Some of the evacuated patients are receiving continued treatment in two MSF compounds in the Mamba Point area of Monrovia. Only one hospital, with 140 beds, is operational in the capital.

#### *Water and Sanitation*

ICRC has been working to ensure that the displaced have access to safe drinking water and basic hygiene facilities. Starting on June 15, ICRC supplied several thousand

liters of drinking water per day to approximately 5,000 IDPs. ICRC has also begun construction on latrines and wells at several IDP sites to meet the needs of approximately 20,500 people. ICRC resumed water and sanitation activities on June 18 at the Montserrado IDP camps. ICRC also continued the provision of health care for IDPs, refugees, and residents through its health clinic at the Blamacee camp.

There were only two pit latrines to serve more than 10,000 IDPs living in one of the schools in central Monrovia. According to a statement issued by the Liberian health ministry, there are only 16 functioning toilets at the SKD Stadium in Monrovia, which has a population of 20,000 displaced persons. According to the Health Minister, there were 58 reported cases of cholera and four confirmed deaths during the week of June 16.

According to Save the Children – U.K., congestion and lack of sanitation are responsible for frequent outbreaks of diarrhea, malaria, and cholera at the IDP camps. Save the Children has been attempting to carry out immunization and other measures to prevent a worsening situation.

*Nutrition.*

On June 21, UN OCHA reported that the U.N. World Food Program (WFP) was continuing food distributions to IDPs in Monrovia, increasing its target population from 18,000 to 23,000. However, there is no further information currently available on the status of the distributions in the midst of the ongoing violence in the capital. It is also uncertain whether WFP food stores were looted when LURD took control of the port on June 25.

WVI completed a three day-distribution of WFP-provided emergency food for 9,424 IDPs on June 24 at the D. Tweh High School in New Kru Town, approximately two kilometers (km) outside of central Monrovia. WVI planned to begin a similar distribution in the Seighbeh IDP camp, approximately 14 km from Monrovia, on June 25.

According to WVI, two more people have died at the SKD Stadium and IDPs camps in Monrovia, due to anemia and malnutrition, bringing to 23 the number of IDPs recorded dead in and around Monrovia due to disease and hunger in recent weeks. There is no agency currently conducting body disposal, which poses additional health hazards around IDP camps.

**USG HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE**

In FY 2003, USAID/OFDA has provided more than \$1.2 million to support humanitarian needs in Liberia. USAID/OFDA provided more than \$517,000 to Action Against Hunger (ACF) to support of emergency nutrition needs in Monrovia and more than \$751,000 to MERLIN to address emergency health and water and sanitation needs throughout Liberia.

Thus far in FY 2003, USAID/FFP has provided 9,260 metric tons of P.L. 480 Title II emergency food assistance, valued at \$6 million, to Liberia. The commodities provided by USAID/FFP include a combination of cereals, pulses, and vegetable oil, and Corn Soya Blend for therapeutic and supplementary feeding. USAID/FFP emergency food assistance is provided to vulnerable populations through direct distribution, food for work programs, emergency school feeding, maternal and child health programs, and supplementary and therapeutic feeding programs. USAID/FFP programs are implemented in Liberia through WFP.

State/PRM has provided support for Liberian refugees since 1989 and for Sierra Leonean refugees in Liberia since 1991. To date in FY 2003, State/PRM has provided \$1 million in emergency assistance for refugees in Liberia through UNHCR. State/PRM has also provided nearly \$13 million to UNHCR and more than \$6 million to various NGOs to support Liberian refugees in Côte d’Ivoire, Guinea, and Sierra Leone. This is in addition to unearmarked funding for UNHCR for Africa (\$55.1 million) and ICRC for Africa (\$29.2 million).

**OTHER DONOR HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE<sup>1</sup>**

In addition to the USG’s efforts, several other donors have made significant humanitarian contributions to Liberia in 2003.

<i>Donor</i>	<i>Amount</i>
Norway	\$1,654,267
Canada	\$384,833
Sweden	\$350,877
Netherlands	\$189,000
Italy	\$139,899
Switzerland	\$81,103

<sup>1</sup> As reported by UN OCHA’s ReliefWeb Financial Tracking of donor contributions inside and outside of the U.N. Consolidated Appeal on June 27, 2003

**U.S. GOVERNMENT HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE TO LIBERIA**

<i>Agency</i>	<i>Implementing Partner</i>	<i>Sector</i>		<i>Amount</i>
<b>Liberia – FY 2003</b>				
<b>USAID Total .....</b>				<b>\$7,268,784</b>
<b>USAID/OFDA .....</b>				<b>\$1,268,784</b>
	ACF	Nutrition	Monrovia	\$517,773
	MERLIN	Health and Water/Sanitation	Country-wide	\$751,011
<b>USAID/FFP .....</b>				<b>\$6,000,000</b>
	WFP	P.L. 480 Title II Food Assistance – 9,260 MT	Country-wide	\$6,000,000
<b>STATE/PRM .....</b>				<b>\$1,000,000</b>
	UNHCR	Annual Refugee Operations	Country-wide	\$1,000,000
<b>TOTAL USG HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE TO LIBERIA IN FY 2003 .....</b>				<b>\$8,268,784</b>

\* State/PRM figures include funding within Liberia. State/PRM also provides additional Africa-wide and regional assistance not reflected in this total. Please see the USG Humanitarian Assistance section for further details.



Bernd McConnell  
 Director  
 Office of U.S. Foreign Disaster Assistance